

"We did it again," seemed to be the password last Saturday night when members of the Class of 1923 of Partridge Academy (Duxbury High School) and their spouses met for a reunion dinner.

There were 17 members in the graduating class of '23, the largest class up to that time. (As compared with 96 in Duxbury's 1968 class). The first reunion, the 30th, we held in 1953 at the home of the Philip Delanos, with all members present. (Even our principal, Robert Cushman, was at that one.) Ten years sped quickly by before our next get-together, our 40th. All members were still alive and all but one present. This year, our 45th, all were still alive, even if only 13 made it to the party.

Mildred Tammatt Glass, who retired this year from her teaching duties in Duxbury, and perennial chairman at all our affairs, welcomed class members and their guests. Robert Osborne, our valedictorian (who has been an English teacher and sports coach at Milton High for many years) reminisced about our school life and compared the "then and now" of sports, baseball in particular, which is his favorite. Through his efforts, our group was the first to have DHS uniforms, which were player-swapped regardless of size. Our playing fields were real "diamonds in the rough," with stones to mark bases. Today he says the boys in even the 8th grade teams get a little miffed if the uniforms don't "fit" perfectly. Philip Delano (who has served our town for 27 years as selectman and assessor) welcomed his fellow-class

"WE DID IT AGAIN"

By Blanche B. White



members. Appropriate and amusing gifts relative to present and past hobbies were presented to class members by the chairman, who herself was wearing a corsage of combined class colors and flowers sent by the boys of '23.

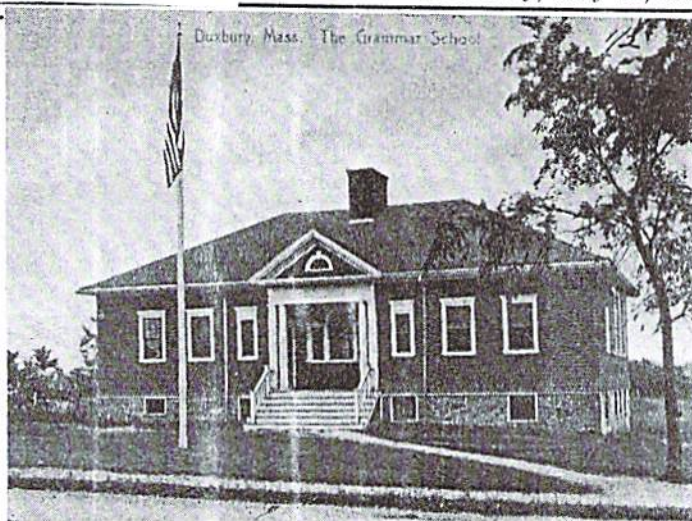
Letters of greeting were read from Louise Chubbuck Scott (Mrs. Charles) from Florida, and from Martha Wadsworth Follansbee (Mrs. Robert) of New Hampshire. Bailey Cushing of Plymouth and James MacFarlane of Duxbury were the other two members not present.

BIG SURPRISE

One surprise of the evening was having two pieces of music presented to us, and of hearing them played and sung by the vocalist: "My Kind of Guy" and "Let's Dream Again," words and music by our classmate Gladys Loring Torre (Mrs. Gabriel) of Montclair, N.J. "Glad" is a member of ASCAP. "My Kind of Guy" has been recorded under R.I.C. label by "The Birds of Paradise."

We tried a little after-dinner singing of old schoolday lunch-hour favorites, the "Sheik of Araby," "Whispering," and "Capital Ship," but memories and voices don't weather 45 years as well as our dominant spirits do, even though we gave it the old school try.

Many, on hearing that one of our longtime reunions are in the offing, ask, "What's it like to be brought up in a country town, and go to school with the same kids all your life?" Actually we didn't. The path to high school in our day was more circuitous than it is today, and many of us had never met until we reached high school. Although the majority were born here, transportation being what it was in 1911-12 when we were starting the pupils in our class probably attended as many as six or seven different primary schools, including Duxbury, So. Duxbury, Island Creek, Millbrook, North Duxbury, Ashdod (and even Boston by those who moved here later. When we completed our curriculum in these ancient and revered halls of learning, we were funnelled into two grammar schools, the Village School on Washington St., (commonly referred to as the Green Grammar because of its color, now long gone; the Charles Davis house now occupies its place). The Twin School Houses in Tarklin housed



pupils from the other side of town. There must have been transient families and school dropouts then too, because our Village School graduating class numbered 23 and perhaps as many came from Tarklin. Yet we only ended up with 17 at the finish line.

Transportation was practically non-existent en masse that is. It was shanks mare for most of us or horse and carriage or bicycle for those more distant or affluent. Big horse-drawn barges brought the pupils of West Duxbury and Tarklin to high school until motor-driven buses replaced them around 1919.

DIVERSIONS

Somehow we coped, and enjoyed basketball in Old Town Hall, dances upstairs in the Academy, or at Mattakeesett Hall and sliding and skating wherever there was a hill or pond. As that song goes, "why can't they be like we were perfect in every way; what's the matter with kids today?" There are an awful lot of very nice kids today, and we were far from perfect. Our peculiarities and peccadillos were often causes of consternation for parents and teachers. The boys tried smoking cornsilk, dry leaves, or a genuine cigarette. They stayed out too late, of course, but there were no drinking problems. The girls naughtily rolled their stockings, discarded their corsets and used cheek rouge. And, oh, those terrible ear-puff hair-do's.

Rumor was rife then as now about teacher-pupil problems, and the big one making the rounds then, which of course was totally untrue, was that our visiting music teacher, the late Rebecca Phillips (Mrs. Wendell) couldn't get us to learn classical music, and had to give into our whims and teach us "Yes, We Have No Bananas," and other equally popular and nauseous tunes. Not so, the lady was so gentle and patient she might have granted our request had we made it. We never did. There were those who swore they went by and heard us practicing them during our music lessons. Rubbish. The dear lady's courses were conducted with the utmost decorum at all times. It was just sewing circle gossip.

Scholastically, we were fairly average, as was the education provided us with college and business courses offered. (No shop or home ec). Those who could afford it and were qualified went on to college or normal schools, and the others "made out" somehow. (No local scholarships were available at that time). There wasn't a sluggard in our class.

Graduation exercises years ago were formal. The corny humor of class "wills" and class prophecies were interspersed lightly with the deep and stirring speeches delivered by town officials, educators and graduates. Valedictorian Bob Osborne, when his big night came, had the mumps and his friend Phil Delano pinch-hit for him and read his deathless prose. Howard Mann, who now lives in Whitman, was salutarian.

Our exercises were held on the night of June 20, 1923, at The First Parish Church. We marched in to the tune of "March of the Siamese," played by Pioppi's orchestra. It was hot and that ripping sound when we rose from varnished chairs to perform, was unnerving. The girls wore white dresses, mostly hand-fashioned by their mothers or aunts; the boys wore dark suits (some with long pants for the first time). Class colors, blue and white; class flower, rose; and our motto was "Gold not Gilt." (Weren't we the bold ones?) We did not stay out all night. Some took the age-old ride down to the Long Bridge, as the bridge was called then.

Our reception (present senior prom) was held the next evening in flower-bedecked Mattakecsett Hall. Oh boy, that's when we wore the store-bought dresses (lovely pure silks, embroidered

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WE DID IT:

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linens or sheer organdies; no synthetic stuff). One girl, pardon one old girl -- vividly remembers that reception. When one of the parents approached her in the line, she remembered the gentleman had once saved her from having an almost runaway horse and wagon, so she said, "Good evening Mr. Thomas, did you ever get your cow rope back?" Her mother, next in line, hearing her, almost swooned with embarrassment, and did she get "what for" later that night.

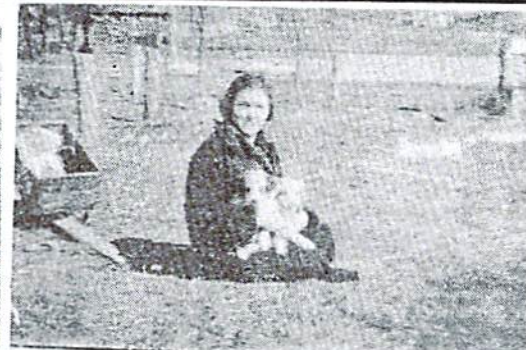
"Such a remark of greeting in a receiving line, how could you?"

Gee, the sweet girl graduate was only trying to be friendly. And thus we went out into the world 45 long, long years ago.

As they say at the end of some movie credits, "a good cast of characters bears repeating," so here is the list of those 17 hardy graduates of 1923:

Robert Osborne, Howard Mann, Philip Delano, John Peterson, Carl Santheson, Jr., Ernest Chandler, Victor Shiff, James MacFarlane, Bailey Cushing, Mildred Tammatt Glass (Mrs. Elmer), Sarah Wadsworth Randall (Mrs. Willard), Gladys Loring Torre (Mrs. Gabriel), Helen Thomas Wickstrom (Mrs. Carl), Nancy MacFarlane Glass (Mrs. John), Blanche Burke White (Mrs. William), Louise Chubbuck Scott (Mrs. Charles), and Martha Wadsworth Follansbee (Mrs. Robert).

MEMBERS OF THE CLASS

Blanche & Mary White
1923